

Plant and Animal Quarantine in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands*

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(Submitted for publication December, 1961)

In 1946, shortly after the end of the Second World War, the U.S. Government created an organization known as the U.S. Commercial Company for the purpose of reestablishing the economy of the former Japanese controlled islands in Micronesia and of the Island of Guam, a U.S. possession in Micronesia. Two entomologists with the U.S. Commercial Company surveyed the principal islands of Micronesia and made certain recommendations concerning pest control and plant and animal quarantine. The Pacific Science Board, a division of the National Research Council, implemented these recommendations by temporarily employing a U.S. Department of Agriculture quarantine entomologist to further survey the pest problems in Micronesia and, in particular, to set up agricultural quarantines for the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands and Guam. In 1948, the U.S. Department of Agriculture loaned the U.S. Navy, which was then administering both Guam and the Trust Territory, two entomologists to handle agricultural entomology and quarantine for both areas. This situation continued until June 1951 when the administration of the Trust Territory passed to the U.S. Department of the Interior. The Trust Territory then hired a Staff Entomologist to handle entomology and quarantine for the Trust Territory without being responsible to the Government of Guam or the U.S. Department of Agriculture. This administrative organization has continued to the present.

As experience was gained and the need arose, agricultural quarantines for the Trust Territory have been rewritten and amended. The most recent amendments were made in June 1959. The agricultural quarantines of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands are known as the "Plant and Animal Quarantine Laws," and are authorized by and are a part of the Code of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

The Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands is divided into six administrative districts: Rota, Yap, Palau, Truk, Ponape, and the Marshall Islands Districts under the jurisdiction of the Department of the Interior. A seventh, Saipan District, is administered by the U.S. Navy. Each district has a District Agriculturist who is responsible for enforcing the Plant and Animal Quarantine Laws

* Presented at the TENTH PACIFIC SCIENCE CONGRESS of the Pacific Science Association, held at the University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii, U.S.A., 21 August to 6 September, 1961, and sponsored by the National Academy of Sciences, B. P. Bishop Museum, and the University of Hawaii.

of his district under the general supervision of the Staff Entomologist. All American agriculturists in the Trust Territory are Agricultural Quarantine Inspectors. In addition, each district has two or three Micronesian agricultural employees who are Agricultural Quarantine Inspectors. Inspectors are furnished with badges and uniforms, and examine all ships and planes and their baggage and cargoes entering the district centers. Certain islands away from the centers, occupied by private organizations and military or other government organizations, are considered as ports of entry and enforcement of the quarantines is managed through collaborative agreements though such enforcement is not up to the standards obtainable at the district centers where the great bulk of the incoming traffic arrives.

The great distances involved in the Trust Territory (3 million square miles) create special quarantine problems and at the same time afford certain safeguards. Quarantine is exercised not only to control traffic entering the Trust Territory but also to control traffic between the different districts of the Trust Territory since there are considerable differences in the pest faunas of the different districts.

Particular emphasis has been placed on the quarantines to prevent the further spread within the Trust Territory of the melon fly (*Dacus curcurbitae*), Oriental fruit fly (*Dacus dorsalis*), coconut rhinoceros beetle (*Oryctes rhinoceros*) and the giant African snail (*Achatina fulica*). The only major pest to gain entrance into the Trust Territory since the U.S. Department of the Interior administration is the cottony cushion scale (*Icerya purchasi*) which gained entry to the Marshall Islands about five years ago.